



Amy G. Rabinowitz
Counsel

December 2, 2002

Mary L. Cottrell, Secretary
Department of Telecommunications and Energy
One South Station
Boston, MA 02110

Re: D.T.E. 01-68

Dear Secretary Cottrell:

I am enclosing the December 2002 Quarterly Report in the above-captioned docket.

Thank you very much for your time and attention to this matter.

Very truly yours,

Amy G. Rabinowitz

cc: Service List

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Massachusetts Electric Company
and
Nantucket Electric Company

December 2002
Quarterly Report

December 2, 2002

Submitted to:
Massachusetts Department of
Telecommunications and Energy
D.T.E. 01-68

Submitted by:

Massachusetts Electric

A **National Grid** Company



Nantucket Electric

A **National Grid** Company



I. Introduction

At the end of the summer of 2001, the Department asked all Massachusetts utilities, including Massachusetts Electric Company and Nantucket Electric Company (collectively “Mass. Electric” or “Company”) to undertake a critical self-assessment of their ability to provide reliable distribution service to customers. On October 29, 2001, Mass. Electric filed a comprehensive ten volume response (“Reliability Report”), which gave detailed information about the various factors that contribute to Mass. Electric’s provision of reliable distribution service: growth forecasting; communication and notification procedures during outages; use of emergency generators and other equipment; personnel staffing and deployment during outages; weather forecasting; and maintenance and design of the distribution system. In the Reliability Report, Mass. Electric also analyzed its performance during the summer of 2001, and identified certain steps that it was taking to improve future reliability. On March 22, 2002, the Department issued an order on Mass. Electric’s Reliability Report, directing Mass. Electric to address several suggestions for improving each of the various factors and report on several follow-up items and to provide the Department with a report assessing its expected ability to respond adequately during the summer of 2002. The March 22 order also required Mass. Electric to make annual and quarterly reports for the next two years regarding certain reliability factors. On June 7, 2002, Mass. Electric filed its Compliance Filing and Report on Summer 2002 Readiness (“June 2002 Report”) and on August 30, 2002 the Company filed its September 2002 Quarterly Report (“September 2002 Report”). This filing is Mass. Electric’s next compliance filing required by the Department’s order in this docket.

II. Discussion

For each of the quarterly reports, the Department has requested information from Mass. Electric regarding the use of emergency generators and other equipment; personnel staffing and deployment, including employee hiring and training and emergency assistance resource sharing; and maintenance and design, including tree trimming and pole replacement activities. This report provides an update to the Department from the September 2002 Report.

A. Use of Emergency Generators and Other Equipment

As described in earlier reports, the Company has contracted for and established deployment procedures for two-megawatt trailer-mounted, diesel engine emergency generator units for use during emergency conditions.

As reported in the September Report, the Company deployed three units to the Coddington Avenue substation in Medford on July 10, 2002. These units remained on-site for contingency purposes until November 2, 2002 (after completion of the new 2344 supply circuit from Wellington substation to Tufts University), although the Company did not run them in the last quarter.

As reported in the September Report, the Company also installed three units at the Gloucester substation on July 20, 2002. They remain installed, although the Company has never used them.

The Company also installed two units at the Mellon Bank in Everett on October 7, 2002 during an outage. These units remained in place until October 15, 2002. The Company never ran the units, but had them in place in case they were needed to provide service to this critical customer facility during an extended period of service restoration.

B. Personnel Staffing and Deployment

The Department has directed Mass. Electric to provide information on the progress of the hiring and training of 125 engineering and physical workers and the activities of the emergency resource assistance sharing.

1. Employee Hiring and Training

The June 2002 Report detailed the anticipated hiring and training of 125 engineering and physical workers in New England. Of the 125 workers slated to be hired, ninety-three are currently anticipated to be Mass. Electric specific, approximately seventy-four of whom will be physical workers and nineteen will be supervisory, engineering, and technical support personnel. For the approximately seventy-four physical workers, Mass. Electric anticipates that approximately forty-one will be overhead lines workers, twenty-three will be underground lines workers, and ten will be substation workers.

For the physical worker position, posting of positions is the first but most important step of the process to elicit qualified candidates for, and ultimately fill, a particular job.¹ At this time, sixty-six of the seventy-four Mass. Electric physical worker positions have been posted with the local unions.

To date, Mass. Electric and its New England affiliates have filled a total of fifty-three physical worker positions. Mass. Electric has filled thirty-seven of those fifty-three physical worker positions. The Company and its affiliates have completed a number of pre-qualification training sessions, with 127 workers now pre-qualified to bid on the physical worker vacancies. Of the 127, ninety-five workers are pre-qualified to bid on Mass. Electric jobs.

¹ As explained in the June 2002 Report, physical workers are placed according to labor contracts. The Company's experience indicates, however, that often Mass. Electric is not able to fill all postings with qualified candidates from the eligible bidders pool of the local union, and additional posting may likely be forthcoming. For instance, the Company typically initially posts positions to the local union, then subsequently may courtesy post to the other union locals in the Company. If the Company is unable to find qualified eligible candidates from within the Company, Mass. Electric may pursue hiring candidates from outside the Company.

In addition, all nineteen supervisory, engineering and technical support jobs have been filled.

The Company and its affiliates remain committed to filling all 125 positions by the end of this year and expect to have awarded the majority of the physical workers positions in response to the job postings.

2. Emergency Assistance Resource Sharing

The Company's emergency assistance resource sharing policy remains as described in the Reliability Report. Since the filing of the September 2002 Report, Mass. Electric has both provided and received emergency assistance.

During a storm in September, Mass. Electric provided five crews to United Illuminating in Connecticut from September 13th through September 16th. During the early part of a storm on November 17th through 19th, Mass. Electric's affiliate in Rhode Island, The Narragansett Electric Company, provided twenty-seven crews to assist Mass. Electric's recovery efforts. During the latter part of that same storm, after the Company's customers were restored, the Company provided a total of twenty-one crews to Connecticut Light & Power Company in Connecticut and two crews to Paxton Municipal Light Plant.

C. Maintenance and Design

With regard to maintenance and design, the Department has asked for a report on tree trimming activities, including procedures, schedules, and a description of the cooperation by and coordination with communities. The Department has also requested quarterly information on pole replacement activity, including procedures for surveying poles and working with other utilities in this process, with particular attention to the systematic removal of double poles and removing the root cause of undue accumulation of double poles by better coordination with

owners and tenants of poles. The Company's tree trimming and pole replacement activities are described below.

1. Tree Trimming

The Company's tree trimming procedures, process for coordinating with communities, circuit-based trimming program, and tree trimming staff remain as described in the June 2002 Report. This report provides an update to the Department from the September 2002 Report.

Mass. Electric has a fiscal year 2003 goal of 2,024 miles trimmed. During the period August 1st through October 31st, Mass. Electric trimmed 381 miles. The relatively low amount of miles trimmed during this period resulted from the bidding, negotiating, evaluating, awarding, and implementation of new tree trimming contracts with outside vendors. The Company anticipates that the tree trimming results will increase under these new contracts, which are designed to improve the efficiency of the tree trimming program.

2. Pole Replacement Activities

As of November 2002, approximately 9,809 doubled poles exist in Mass. Electric's system.² Of these 9,809 doubled poles, 255 are ready for removal by Mass. Electric and 1,637 are ready for Mass. Electric to transfer its facilities. This represents a 12% decline in the number of doubled poles in the Company's service territory and a 6% decline in the number of poles awaiting action by the Company. The Company continues to make progress on addressing the double pole issue. .

As reported earlier, the Company has been working closely with other pole owners in Massachusetts, including Verizon, NStar, Western Massachusetts Electric Company, and Fitchburg Gas & Electric Company, to develop a common database to track doubled pole locations and transfer status for various companies attached to poles, notify attaching companies

² These numbers are subject to confirmation with Verizon.

of their obligations via email, and provide summary reports. The pole owners evaluated several vendors and decided to enter into separate agreements with Inquest Technologies, Inc. of Southborough, MA for use of its Pole Lifecycle Management (“PLM”) System. The Company has executed an agreement with Inquest Technologies. The development and configuration of this database is now complete and Inquest Technologies is in the process of populating it with data provided by each of the pole owners. The Company will continue to provide the Department with updates on the implementation of the PLM application and the anticipated reduction in doubled poles in its next quarterly report.

III. Conclusion

Mass. Electric will continue to update and provide progress reports required by the Department, as set forth in the Department’s March 22, 2002 order.